



James E. McGreevey
Governor

Susan Bass Levin
Commissioner

Vol. 7 No. 4
June 2002

Community Matters

A Newsletter for the Employees of the Department of Community Affairs

"DCA Budget Puts People First"

Commissioner Levin told two legislative budget review committees recently that, despite the fiscal challenge confronting the state, DCA will continue to meet its mandate in housing, urban redevelopment, support for local government, services for women and minorities, and public safety.

Appearing before the Assembly Appropriations Committee and the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee, Commissioner Levin expressed confidence that DCA will be able to deliver the programs and assistance that people and communities depend upon across the state.

"Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, DCA has a broad mandate. We help revitalize communities and direct smart growth initiatives. We build affordable housing and support the work of local governments. We ensure that buildings are safe, and fire departments are trained and equipped.

"This department is deeply involved in every community, ensuring safe neighborhoods and decent housing. The Governor's recommended budget for the Department of Community Affairs is truly not about line items; it is about people and communities. And even under the challenging fiscal constraints we face this year, I am confident – with the Governor's vision and the Legislature's support – we will continue to provide our people and communities with the quality services they deserve."

Commissioner Levin said the budget bolsters the Governor's commitment to smart growth and the State Plan in the creation of a

Continued on page 3



Bear Atwood

Bear Atwood, one of the state's leading advocates for women, was recently named executive director of DCA's Division on Women following her nomination by Gov. James E. McGreevey.

Bear, a former public defender, served as president of the 10,000-member National Organization for Women – New Jersey (NOW-NJ) from 1995 to 1998, as well as chair of the NOW-NJ Foundation.

She has been director of public information at Planned Parenthood of Central New Jersey since 1999.

"I look forward to providing a strong voice for women and to working closely to help the administration meet its goals of raising the status of women in New Jersey," said Bear, a Fair Haven resident.

Bear Atwood Takes Helm at Division on Women

Bear received a bachelor's degree with honors in political science and Spanish from Denison University in Ohio. She received her law degree from Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

Commissioner Susan Bass Levin said Bear is an excellent choice to lead the Division on Women.

"We are fortunate to have someone with Bear's experience and demonstrated commitment to women's issues," said Commissioner Levin. "The work of the Division on Women serves to empower women, strengthen families and help children, and I welcome Bear's advice and counsel as we work with Governor McGreevey to improve the quality of life for the people of our state."

DCA Employees Complete Defibrillator Training

A total of 24 DCA employees have completed training in the use of portable defibrillation devices recently obtained by the department. This makes DCA the first department in state government to train staff and adopt policy on use of the life-saving equipment known as automated external defibrillators, or AEDs.

AEDs have proven effective in saving lives that might otherwise be lost to sudden cardiac arrest. The devices have traditionally been used by firefighters, police, flight attendants and life guards. As they become more portable and easier to operate, however, they are becoming common in public places such as sports arenas and casinos, and in the workplace.

DCA purchased two units. One is kept at the security desk on the 1st floor, while the other will be stored in the Human Resources Office on the 8th floor. Each floor has at least two people trained in their use and also trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

"We've ensured there is somebody on each floor that can provide AED services," said **Glenda Simmons** of Human Resources, who organized the employee training with **Jackie Welsh**, also of Human Resources.

Glenda and Jackie also drafted the department's policy on AED use. That policy calls upon employees who see a possible cardiac arrest victim to call 911 first, then call the Human Resources Office at 2-

6030 to dispatch an AED/CPR certified employee.

AEDs are about the size of a portable laptop computer and provide brief but powerful electrical stimulation to the person's chest, interrupting the ventricular fibrillation and helping to restore the heart's natural rhythm.

According to medical research, as many as 50 percent of cardiac arrest victims could be resuscitated if they were defibrillated within seven minutes or less. Survival can be as high as 90 percent if a victim is defibrillated during the first minute after collapse.

A floor-by-floor listing of the DCA employees who received training in AED and CPR and their phone numbers can be found on page 3.

headline news

Housing Scholars Get to Work

A group of New Jersey college students with an interest in affordable housing construction and neighborhood revitalization have begun summer internships working for non-profit community development corporations, public housing authorities and financial institutions across the state through the First Union/DCA Housing Scholars Program.

This year's class of 29 students from seven participating colleges and universities represented the largest ever for the program, now in its 14th year.

"More and more bright people like you who want to make a difference in society are finding out about the community development field and the increasing number of career options in it," DCA Chief of Staff **Marge DellaVecchia** told the group at a recent welcome and orientation day event at Rutgers - Newark. "I can't think of a better or more rewarding way to spend the summer. Thank you for caring. Thank you for getting involved," Marge added.

The First Union/DCA Housing Scholars Program is administered through DCA's Division of Housing and Community Resources by **Meyer Pincelli** and **Janis Ginsburg**.

Maureen Fullaway Leads COAH

Affordable housing specialist **Maureen Fullaway** has been named executive director of the New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing (COAH).

The COAH Board of Directors confirmed Fullaway, who is currently a principal planner at COAH, at its May 2 meeting.

"Maureen Fullaway has made a career of helping local communities understand their affordable housing obligations and implement fair share plans," said Commissioner Susan Bass Levin. "Now she'll be able to put that expertise to work statewide."

As a COAH principal planner since 2001, Maureen was responsible for reviewing local plans to create affordable housing as required under the Fair Housing Act.

Prior to COAH, Maureen worked six years as the chief executive officer of Housing Services, Inc., of Point Pleasant Beach, a municipal consulting firm specializing in the administration and implementation of affordable housing programs.

During that same period, Maureen was also an Assistant Planner with an affiliated company, Bay Point Engineering, which specializes in helping local communities prepare their Fair Housing plans.

Maureen, a resident of Brick Township in Ocean County, said her experience growing up in a working class family in the City of Elizabeth sparked her career interest in the issues of urban redevelopment and affordable housing.

Now she said she looks forward to being in a position to help communities understand and address their constitutional obligation to provide affordable housing.

"My goal is to make COAH even more of a partner to New Jersey's towns and cities," Fullaway said. "I see COAH as a resource for making the Fair Housing Act work for local communities."



"Women Firsts" Honored at DCA

DCA's Division on Women recently paid tribute to department employees past and present who have the distinction of being the first women to hold their respective positions.

DOW's research of "Women Firsts of DCA" identified prominent people of the past, such as the department's first woman commissioner, Patricia Sheehan (1974-1978) and assistant commissioner,

Bonnie Watson Coleman.

The division also identified eight women currently working at the department as first in their fields:

Edna Charring and Adrianna Holm, Housing Inspectors. Edna and Adrianna were DCA's first women housing inspectors when hired in 1976. Edna currently works as a senior field representative for the State Local Cooperative Housing Inspection Program (SLCHIP). Adrianna holds the position of supervisor in the Division of Codes and Standards.

Cindy McDowell, Director of Fiscal Affairs. Cindy was named director of fiscal affairs in March 2002 after a year as supervisor of the accounting operations unit of the state Office of Management and Budget. This is Cindy's "second shift" at DCA. She started at DCA in 1987 and became the department's chief fiscal officer in 1996.

Heather Puskar, Fire Inspector. Asked what it was like being DCA's first woman fire inspector, Heather answered, "It was difficult at first doing a predominantly male job. But the inspectors treated me with respect and I learned a lot from them. The challenge was dealing with the public and earning their respect." Heather became a fire inspector in 1996 and is currently the National Fire Incident Reporting System field representative for Central and Southern New Jersey for the Division of Fire Safety.

Glenda Simmons, Labor Relations Officer. Glenda became DCA's first woman Labor Relations Officer and established the department's Labor Relations Office in 1986. She is currently the executive assistant to the director of human resources and supervisor of the training unit.

Patricia Swartz, Director of the Office of Recreation. Pat began her career at DCA's Office of Recreation in 1978 and was named the office's director in 1986. As director, she has worked to expand recreational opportunities for the disabled.

Gloria Taylor, Affirmative Action Officer. Gloria served as DCA's first woman affirmative action officer for 10 years starting in 1981. She cites former Commissioner Patricia Sheehan and former Assistant Commissioner Bonnie Watson-Coleman as her mentors.

Judy Tripodi, Assistant Director, Division of Local Government Services. Judy has been assistant director at LGS for eight years. She identified former LGS Deputy Director Richard Turner as her mentor.

Commissioner
Susan Bass
Levin (r)
introduces
Maureen
Fullaway
as the new
executive
director
of COAH.



"Look Who's Talking"

DCA staffers are experts in their fields and always in demand as speakers.

Here are some of the planned engagements:

June 4: Joseph Donald, Office of Smart Growth, will be guest speaker for a course on brownfields redevelopment offered by the Rutgers Cook College Office of Continuing Professional Education in New Brunswick.

June 5: Sean Closkey, Executive Director, HMFA, will deliver the keynote address at the semi-annual membership meeting of the Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey in Trenton.

June 6: Thomas Pitcherello, Bureau of Technical Services, Code Assistance Unit, will be guest speaker at the Sussex & Warren Code Enforcement Officials meeting in Andover.

June 12: Paul Stridick, Executive Director, Main Street New Jersey, joins a panel discussion on downtown revitalization at the 2002 Downtown New Jersey Conference in Freehold.

June 14: Judy Tripodi, Deputy Director, Local Government Services, and Tina Zapicchi, Bureau Chief, LGS, will join a panel on budgeting at the Institute for Professional Development in Wayne.

June 17: Carlos Rodriguez, Acting Executive Director, Office of Smart Growth, will be a guest speaker at "Emerging Markets – Summit V," a seminar on diversity and demographics, at Rutgers in New Brunswick.



DCA AED/CPR Contact List

A floor-by-floor listing of the DCA employees who received training in AED and CPR and their phone numbers follows:

1st floor

Keith Campbell	2-7972
Sarah Seigel	2-9807

2nd floor

Beverly Robinson	4-0132
Phyllis Walker	2-7932

3rd floor

Lorna Johnson	2-5954
Maria Montesino	2-9708

4th floor

Rich Greenberg	3-2515
John Paluchowski	2-5247
Emile Kolick	3-8210
Steven Sutow	3-6717

5th floor

Richard Forman	3-6166
Renee Jenkins	2-7721
Edward Roellke	4-1280
Michele Smith-Hector	4-1903

6th floor

Ivette Edwards	7-0390
John Flynn	4-2136

7th floor

James Cordingley	2-1547
Melissa Drew	3-6324
Evelyn Langston	3-6322
Kent Neiswender	3-6115

8th floor

Sunita Hayban	2-6030
Pam Schnoering	3-5842
Lauren Upshur	2-6030
Jacqueline Welsh	2-6030

Budget...continued

new Office of Smart Growth within DCA. This office will assist the work of the Governor's Smart Growth Policy Council, a cabinet-level body comprised of senior administration officials that will promote coordinated, smart-growth planning.

The budget also includes \$2.7 million in Smart Growth Planning Grants that will enable municipalities and counties to develop smart growth plans designed to revitalize communities and curb sprawl.

The proposed budget continues support for DCA's Faith-Based Initiative, the Center for Hispanic Policy, Research and Development, the Neighborhood Preservation Program and the Main Street New Jersey Program.

It includes funding for the Downtown Living Program, which provides low-interest loans for the construction of market-rate apartments in cities.

It also introduces a new urban revitalization program – the Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit.

This program will provide up to \$10 million in state tax credits annually to corporations that assist community-based groups with neighborhood preservation and revitalization efforts that are part of an approved, strategic plan.

"Against the backdrop of the unprecedented budget deficit, I believe that we must work even harder to fulfill our mission of revitalizing communities, implementing smart growth, building affordable housing and helping our cities and towns grow stronger," Commissioner Levin said.

"The Governor's proposed budget for DCA reflects his strong commitment to our towns and cities, to quality housing, to vital community services, to vibrant public-private partnerships, and to critical assistance to local government."



Community Building News

DCA Nursery: Who Was That Cutie Pie???



If you guessed Judy White, you were right.

Judy has worked for DCA since 1980. She currently works in the Housing Assistance Element of the Division of Housing and Community Resources, where she arranges housing for homeless people and individuals with special needs.

Judy has held a variety of positions in her 22 years at DCA, but says she feels especially good about the work she does now.

"It's very gratifying," she said. "A lot of the people I deal with are homeless, and to see the changes in them from the time I first meet them to a year later ... to see the strides they've made, it has been very, very heartwarming and rewarding."

Judy and her husband, Howard, a retired Trenton police detective, live in Lawrenceville with their son, Chip. They also have a daughter, Monica Kelly, who is a social worker in Trenton's Wilson Elementary School, and a nine-year-old granddaughter, McKenzie.



*** Reminder ***

Smoking is permitted at the Front Street side of the DCA building. This is the designated smoking area for the building.

16 DCA Employees Honored at State Ceremony

The Department of Personnel joined DCA and other state agencies recently to pay tribute to their employees at an awards ceremony held at the War Memorial as part of National Employees Recognition Month.

More than 1,100 state employees received the this year's New Jersey State Public Service Recognition Award in categories that included exceptional service, community service, professional achievement, heroism, co-worker recognition, customer service excellence, team achievement and longevity.

At the ceremony, Deputy Commissioner **Abraham Antun** congratulated the DCA employees for their achievement.

"This recognition is well-deserved," the deputy commissioner said. "The people being honored demonstrate the many different ways that DCA serves people and communities, and illustrates the pride that people here take in their jobs."

The following descriptions are reprinted, with some editing, from the DCA section of the Public Service Recognition Week Program Book, which were in turn taken from co-worker nomination forms.

Longevity

Larry Ventre, Division of Housing and Community Resources -- "Larry began his career with the State in 1965 with the Office of Economic Opportunity, which became DCA in 1967. He has served as executive assistant to various division directors, overseeing operations in areas including job training, fiscal operations and providing technical support to numerous programs. He currently serves as supervisor of fiscal operations in the Division of Housing." (The award comes just in time. Larry is retiring this month.)

Co-Worker Recognition

Judy White, Division of Housing and Community Resources, Housing Assistance Element -- "Judy is one of those people who silently does her good deeds without expecting credit or a thank you. She does what she does without any fanfare. I call her 'rough tough cream puff' because she has a tremendous, caring heart. When she learns of a co-worker who is ill or who's had surgery, she is the first to offer a dish of food or a helping hand. Judy has received numerous letters from customers who have thanked her for the help she has provided with their emergency housing needs."

Co-Worker Recognition

Frederick R. Dorio, Division of Codes and Standards, Bureau of New Home Warranty -- "Fred Dorio will help anyone, without being asked. Fred has truly gone that extra mile when NHWP made the transition from WANG to the PCs. He took it upon himself to teach and mentor people with many of the new technological tools. He excels in his customer service skills because he is always willing to give customers the utmost courteous attention and help and/or direction."

Co-Worker Recognition

Robin L. Kelley, Division of Housing and Community Resources, Office of Low-Income Energy Conservation -- "Robin Kelley is being nominated for her willingness to go the extra mile. She is rarely out sick, having received awards for perfect attendance for the last three years. She is always willing to learn new things and is willing to put in the extra time it takes to get it right. There have been numerous occasions when she has come into the office when she is on vacation to make sure essential needs of the unit were met. Her vibrant personality and ability to interact with others make her an important asset to our unit."

Co-Worker Recognition

Ivette Edwards, Division of Housing and Community Resources -- "Ivette Edwards served as the chair of DCA's Community Building Initiative, Training Committee. As the chair she was responsible for leading a group of volunteers who implemented several employee-generated suggestions that benefited DCA's ... employees. In addition to the tangible results of Ivette's leadership, her can-do attitude coupled with her people skills make her a natural leader and invaluable co-worker. Always ready to help, Ivette is a true asset to this department."

Co-Worker Recognition

P. Sunita Hayban, Human Resources/Labor Relations -- "Sunita volunteers for Little Brothers, Friends of the Elderly, in Philadelphia. During special occasions such as Christmas, Easter and Thanksgiving, she arranges food baskets and flowers for the elderly and assists in the delivery. She also coordinates an effort to deliver food and gifts to homeless people and their children in the Mercer County area. Sunita is also a volunteer for the American Red Cross and the American Diabetes Association."

Customer Service Excellence

John Brasko, Division of Fire Safety -- "John is a training and education supervisor in Division of Fire Safety who has made a specialty of terrorism preparedness. He spent many hours at the New Jersey Emergency Operations Center after the 9-11 attacks and has worked with other state agencies in planning the state's response to disasters. He also assisted in the writing of the State Emergency Operations Plan's section on weapons of mass destruction."

Teamwork/Partnership Achievement

Martin Bierbaum, Carmen Valentin and James Requa, State Plan Implementation Specialists -- "Marty, Carmen and James developed a State Plan implementation strategy that seeks to ensure that the decisions made by state government are consistent with the principles of smart growth. The three created a State Plan Implementation Assistance Team that works with the six departments and agencies represented on the

State Planning Commission -- Agriculture, Commerce and Economic Growth, Community Affairs, Treasury, Environmental Protection and Transportation -- to raise awareness of the State Plan and bring policies and decision-making in line with its goals."

Customer Service Excellence

Jose Sanchez, Division of Housing and Community Resources, Office of Low-Income Energy Conservation -- "A team player, Jose works well with his co-workers and staff of the Weatherization Program's network of sub-grantees. He is totally dependable and his work is of the highest caliber. Thanks to Jose's expertise in computer systems and data management, New Jersey is one of only a small number of states providing the U.S. Department of Energy with online reporting of its weatherization assistance activities."

Customer Service Excellence Award

Charlie Pierson, Sr., Internal Services/Office Services -- "Charlie is always assisting department staff in various ways and never fails to respond quickly to requests. He'll go the extra mile and try to find a way to accomplish a difficult task. He never makes a person feel like he is being put out by their requests (even if they changed their mind several times about what they wanted done). Charlie is good natured and respectful and it is a pleasure to work in an organization with someone like him."

Community Service

Jayne R. Woodson, Division on Women -- "Jayne has contributed greatly to the state as a foster parent. Over the years, she has nurtured numerous children by taking them into her home and providing them with shelter, food, clothing, education, tender care, love and support. She has done this unselfishly after raising two children of her own and adopting two of her foster children. Jayne is a very special woman with a giving heart."

Exceptional Service

Donald Firestine, Michael Bruno and Anthony Barzelatto, Division of Codes and Standards -- "The three Division of Codes and Standards employees were each heading to Liberty State Park in Jersey City on the morning of 9-11 to do a routine inspection of a new waterfront restaurant. By the time reached the park at about 9:15 a.m., they knew their day would be anything but routine. Both towers of the World Trade Center were afire -- directly across the Hudson River from where they stood. The three Codes officers quickly moved into action, driven, they said, by the need to help. They began clearing the dock area of chairs and other items to make room for the first of a series of triage centers for medical personnel to help the injured. Throughout that day, they helped unload people from boats, many of them injured, and did whatever they could to comfort victims and assist rescue personnel."